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THE
HISTORY
OF
MR. FANTOM,
THE
W FASHIONED PHILOSOPHER.
AND HIS MAN WILLIAM.

H. More



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1800.

THE HISTORY, &c.

MR. FANTOM was a retail t
in the city of London. A
had no turn to any expensive vice
was reckoned a sober decent man
he was covetous and proud, selfish
conceited. As soon as he got for
in the world, his vanity began to
play itself, but not in the ordinary
thod, that of making a figure and
away; but still he was tormented
longing desire to draw public
and to distinguish himself. He felt
neral sense of discontent at what he

with a general ambition to be something which he was not ; but this desire had not yet turned itself to any particular object. It was not by his money he could hope to be distinguished, for if his acquaintance had more, and a man must be rich indeed, to be noted for his riches in London. Mr. Fantom's mind was a prey to vain imaginations. He despised all those little acts of kindness and charity which every man is called to perform every day, and while he was contriving grand schemes which lay quite out of his reach, he neglected the ordinary duties of life which lay directly before him. About this time he got hold of a famous little book written by the NEW PHILOSOPHER, whose pestilent doctrines were gone about seeking whom they might destroy ; these doctrines found a ready entrance into Mr. Fantom's mind ; his mind at once shallow and inquisitive, glib and vain, ambitious and dissatisfied. As almost every book was new to him, he fell into the common error of those who begin to read late in life, that of thinking that what he did

not know himself, was equally new to others ; and he was apt to fancy that and the author he was reading were only two people in the world who knew any thing. This book led to the great discovery ; he had now found what his heart panted after, a way to *distinguish himself*. To start out a full grown philosopher at once, to be wise without education, to dispute without learning, to make profelytes without argument was a short cut to fame, which well suited his vanity and his ignorance. He rejoiced that he had been so clever, and to examine for himself, pitied his friends who took things upon trust, and was resolved to assert the freedom of his mind. To a man fond of bold notions and daring paradoxes, solid argument would be flat, and truth would be dull, merely because it is not new. Mr. Fantom believed not in proportion to the strength of the evidence, but in the impudence of the assertion. He was trampling on holy ground with dirty shoes, the smearing the sanctuary with filth and mire, the calling prophets and apostles by the most scurrilous names.

new, and dashing, and dazzling. Fantom now being set free from the reins of slavery and superstition, was resolved to show his zeal in the usual way, by trying to free others, but it would have hurt his vanity had he known that he was the convert of a man who had written only for the vulgar, who had *invented* nothing, no not even one idea of original wickedness; who had stooped to rake up out of the kennel of infidelity, all the loathsome dregs and offal dirt, which polite believers had thrown away as too gross and offensive for their better bred readers.

Mr. Fantom, who considered that a philosopher must set up with a little sort of stock in trade, now picked up all the common place notions against Christianity which have been answered a hundred times over; these he kept by him very cut and dried, and brought out in all companies with a zeal which would have done honor to a better cause, but which was very friends to a better cause are not so apt to discover. He soon got all the cant of the new school. He talked of *narrow-*

ness, and ignorance, and bigotry, prejudice, and priestcraft, on the hand; and on the other of public the love of mankind, and liberality, candour, and toleration, and above benevolence. Benevolence, he said, made up the whole of religion, and all other parts of it were nothing but and jargon and hypocrisy. Finding however, that he made little impression on his old club at the Cat and Bagpipes, he grew tired of their company, there was one member whose society could not resolve to give up, though they seldom agreed, as indeed no men in the same class and habits of could less resemble each other. Trueman was an honest, plain, firm hearted tradesman of the good old who feared God and followed his conscience, he went to church twice on Sundays and minded his shop all the week, spent frugally, gave liberally, and lived moderately.

— Mr. Fantom resolved to retire for a while into the country, and devote his time to his new plans, schemes, theories, and project for the public good.

life of talking, and reading, and writing, and disputing, and teaching, and selecting now struck him as the only way, so he soon set out for the country to his family, to which was now added his new footman, William Wilton, whom he had taken with a good character out of a sober family. He was no longer settled than he wrote to invite Trueman to come and pay him a visit, for he would have burst if he could have got some one to whom he might display his new knowledge, he knew that if on the one hand Mr. Trueman was no scholar, yet on the other he was no fool, and though he despised his *prejudices*, yet he thought he might be made a good decoy duck, if he could once bring Trueman over, the whole club at the Cat and Bagpipes might be brought to follow his example, and thus he might see himself at the head of a society of his own professes, the supreme object of a philosopher's ambition. Trueman came accordingly. He soon found that however he might be shocked at the impious doctrines his friend maintained, yet that

An important lesson might be learnt from the worst enemies of truth ; namely, an ever-wakeful attention to the grand object. If they set out with the carrying on of trade or politics; of private or public affairs still Mr, Fantom was ever on the watch to hitch in his selling doctrines; whatever he began with he was sure to end with a pert squint at the Bible, a vapid jest on the cleanness of the miseries of superstition, and the blessings of philosophy. "Oh!" said Trueman to himself, "when shall Christians half so much in earnest? Is it that almost all zeal is on the wrong side?"

"Well, Mr. Fantom," said Trueman the next day at breakfast, "I am afraid you are leading but an idle sort of life here." "Sir," said Fantom, "I now begin to live to some purpose; I have indeed wasted too much time, and wasted my talent on a little retail trade, in which one is of no note; one can't distinguish oneself." "So much the better," said Trueman, "I had rather not distinguish myself, unless it was by leading a better life than my neighbours. There is

I should dread more than being about. I dare say now heaven is good measure filled with people names were never heard out of town street or village. So I beg *not* to distinguish myself." "Yes, he may if it is only by signing one's to an essay or a paragraph in a paper," said Fantom. "Heaven John Trueman's name out of a paper," interrupted he in a fright, must either be found in the old lay or the Bankrupt List, unless in- I were to remove shop, or sell off old stock." "But in your present ned situation you can be of no use," Fantom. "That I deny," inter- ded the other. "I have filled all the offices with some credit. I never a bribe at an election, no not so as a treat; I take care of my ap- pices, and don't set them a bad ex- e by running to plays and Sadler's s in the week, or jaunting about gig all day on Sundays; for I look it that the country jaunt of the r on Sundays exposes his servants

to more danger than their whole wanton temptations in trade put together."

Fantom. I once had the same vain prejudices about the Church and the Sabbath, and all that antiquated stuff. But even on your own narrow principles, how can a thinking being pass his Sunday better "if he must have a Sunday at all" than by going into the country to admire the works of nature?

Trueman. I suppose you mean the works of God; for I never read in the Bible that nature made any thing. I should rather think that she herself is made by him who made all things. He who, when he said *thou shalt not murder*, said also, *thou shalt keep the Sabbath Day*. But now do you really think that all that multitude of coaches, chariots, chaises, vis-a-vis, booby-hutches, fulkies, sociables, rattrons, gigs, curricles, cabrioles, and waggons, stages, pleasure carts and horses, now crowd our roads; all those country houses within reach, to which the London friends pour in to the gorgeous Sunday feast, which the servants are kept at the church to dress; all those public

wonder the signs of which you read
 the alluring words, AN ORDINARY ON
 DAYS; I say, do you believe that
 those houses and carriages are cram-
 med with philosophers who go on Sun-
 days into the country to admire the
 sights of nature as you call it? In-
 stead, from the reeling gait of some of
 them when they go back at night, one
 might take them for a certain sect cal-
 led the *tipling* philosophers. Then in
 answer to your charge that a little trade-
 ing can do no good, I must tell you
 that I belong to the society for relieving
 prisoners for small debts, and to the sick
 man's friend, and to———

Sceptantom. Oh, enough—all these are
 dross occupations.

Truthman. Then they are better suit-
 ed to petty men of petty fortune. I
 would rather have an ounce of real good
 done with my own hands, and seen with
 my own eyes, than speculate about do-
 ing a ton in a wild way which I know
 can never be brought about.

Sceptantom. I despise a narrow field. O
 for the reign of universal benevolence!

I want to make all mankind good and happy.

Trueman. Dear me! sure that would be a wholesale sort of a job; had you better try your hand at a town or parish first?

Fantom. Sir, I have a plan in my head for relieving the miseries of the whole world. Every thing is bad as it now stands. I would alter all the laws and do away all the religions, and put an end to all the wars in the world. I would every where redress the injustice of fortune, or what the vulgar call providence. I would put an end to all punishments, I would not leave a single prisoner on the face of the globe. This is what I call doing things on a grand scale. "A scale with a vengeance," said Trueman. "As to releasing prisoners, however I don't so much mind that, as it would be pleasing a set of rogues at the expense of all honest men; but as the rest of your plan, if all Christian countries would be so good as to turn Christians, it might be helped a good deal. There would be still plenty enough left indeed, because God

ded this world should be earth and heaven. But still banishing religion from the world would be like stripping of all the pounds from an overcharged bill; and all the troubles which would be left, would be reduced to mere shillings, pence, and farthings, as one may say."

Antom. Your project would rivet the chains which mine is designed to break.

Wrueman. Sir, I have no projects. Projects are in general the offspring of selfishness, vanity, and idleness. I am too busy for Projects, too contented for theories, and I hope have too much hurry for a philosopher. The utmost extent of my ambition at present is, to redress the wrongs of a parish 'prentice who has been cruelly used by his master. Indeed I have another little scheme, which is to prosecute a fellow in our parish who has let a poor wretch in a work-house, of which he had the care, perish through neglect, and you must excuse me.

Antom. The parish must do that, Sir. I own that the wrongs of the

Poles and South Americans so fill mind, as to leave me no time to attend to the petty sorrows of workhouses, parish 'prentices. It is provinces, pires, continents, that the benevolence of the philosopher embraces; every one can do a little paltry good to his neighbour.

Trueman. Every one can, but I do not see every one does. If they would indeed, your business would be readily done to your hands, and your great ocean of benevolence would be filled with the drops which private charity would throw into it. I am glad, however, you are such a friend to the prisoners, because I am just now getting the subscription from our club, to free your poor old friend Tom Saunders, a very honest brother tradesman, who got first into debt, and then into prison through no fault of his own, but merely through the pressure of the times. We have each of us allowed a trifle every week towards maintaining Tom's young family since he has been in prison, but we think we shall do more service to Saunders, and in the end lighten our own expence

ing down at once a little sum to re-
 e to him the comforts of life, and
 him in a way of maintaining his fa-
 y again. We have made up the mo-
 all except five guineas, I am alrea-
 promised four, and you have nothing
 do but to give me the fifth. And so
 a single guinea, without any of the
 ble, the meetings, and the looking
 his affairs, which we have had, you
 at once have the pleasure "and it
 no small one" of helping to save a
 thy family from starving, of redeem-
 an old friend from goal, and of put-
 a little of your boasted benevolence
 action. Realize! Master Fantom,
 e is nothing like realizing. "Why,
 kee, Mr. Trueman," said Fantom
 mering, and looking very black,
 on't think I value a guinea; no Sir,
 spise money, 'tis trash, 'tis dirt, and
 eath the regard of a wise man. 'Tis
 of the unfeeling inventions of ar-
 al society. Sir I could talk to you
 half a day on the abuse of riches,
 on my own contempt of money.
 rueman. O Pray don't give your-
 the trouble, it will be an easier way

by half of proving both, just to put your hand in your pocket and give me a guinea without saying a word about it, and then to you who value time so much and money so little, it will cut the matter short. But come now (for I see you will give nothing) I should be much glad to know what is the sort of good you do yourselves, since you always object to what is done by others. "Sir," Mr. Fantom, "the object of a true philosopher is to diffuse light and knowledge. I wish to see the whole world enlightened."

Trueman, Amen! if you mean the light of the Gospel. But if you mean that one religion is as good as another, and that no religion is the best of all; in short, if you want to enlighten the whole world philosophers, why had better stay as they are. But to spread the true light, I wish it to reach to the very lowest, and I therefore bless the Charity Schools, as instruments for diffusing it.

Fantom, who had no reason to expect that his friend was going to call on him for a subscription on this account

ured to praise them. Saying, "I
no enemy to these institutions. I
ld indeed change the object of in-
ction, but I would have the whole
d instructed."

ere Mrs. Fantom, who with her
ghter had quietly sat by at their work,
ured to put in a word, a liberty she
om took with her husband, who in
zeal to make the world free and hap-
was too prudent to include his wife.
hen my dear," said she, "I wonder
don't let your own servants be taught
tle. The maids can scarcely tell a
r, or say the Lord's Prayer; and
know you won't allow them time
arn. William too has never been
church since we came out of town.
was at first very orderly and obedi-
but now he is seldom sober of an
ing, and in the morning when he
d be rubbing the tables in the par-
he is generally lolling upon them
reading your little manual of the
philosophy." "Mrs. Fantom,"
her husband angrily, "you know
my labours for the public good,
me little time to think of my own

family. I must have a great field, I like to do good to hundreds at once."

"I am very glad of that papa," said Miss Polly, "for then I hope you won't refuse to subscribe to all those pretty children at the Sunday School as you did yesterday, when the gentleman came a begging, because that is the very thing you were wishing for; there are two or three hundred to be done good to at once."

Trueman. Well Mr. Fantom, you are a wonderful man to keep up such a stock of benevolence at so small an expence. To love mankind so dearly and yet avoid all opportunities of doing them good; to have such a noble zeal for the millions, and to feel so little compassion for the units; surely none but a philosopher could indulge so much philanthropy and so much frugality at the same time.

Fantom. I despise the man whose benevolence is swallowed up in the narrow concerns of his own family, or parish, or country.

Trueman. Well, now I have a notion that 'tis as well to do one's own duty

as that of another man, and to do good at home as well as abroad, and I had as leave help Tom Saunders to freedom as a Pole or a South American, though I should be very glad to help them too, but one must begin to love somewhere, and to do good somewhere; and I think 'tis as natural to love one's own family and to do good in one's own neighbourhood as to any body else. And if every man in every family, parish, and county, did the same, why! all the schemes would meet, and the end of one parish where I was doing good would be the beginning of another where somebody else was doing good; so my schemes would jut into my neighbours, and all would fit with a sort of dove-tail exactness."

Here they were told dinner was on table. "Don't think," said Mr. Fantom that you have the best of the argument, because you happen to have the last word. We will finish our talk some other time" So saying they went in to dinner.

When they sat down, Mr. Fantom was not a little out of humour, to see his table in some disorder. William

was also rather more negligent than usual. If the company called for bread, he gave them beer, and he took away the clean plates, and gave them dirty ones. Mr. Fantom soon discovered that his servant was very drunk; he flew into a violent passion, and ordered him out of the room, charging him that he should not appear in his presence in that condition. William obeyed; but having slept an hour or two, and got about half sober, he again made his appearance. His master gave him a most severe reprimand, and called him an idle, drunken, vicious fellow. "Sir," said William, very pertly, "if I do get drunk now and then, I only do it for the good of my country, and in obedience to your wishes." Mr. Fantom, thoroughly provoked, now began to scold him in words not fit to be repeated, and asked him what he meant. "Why, Sir," said William, "you are a philosopher you know, and I have often overheard you say to your company that private vices are public benefits, and so I thought that getting drunk was as pleasant a way of doing good to the public as any, espe-

cially when I could oblige my master at the same time."

"Get out of my house," said Mr. Fantom in a great rage. "I do not desire to stay a moment longer, so pay me my wages." "Not I, indeed," replied the master, nor will I give you a character, so never let me see your face again." William took his master at his word, and not only got out of the house, but out of the country too as fast as possible. When they found he was really gone, they made a hue-and-cry, in order to detain him till they had examined if he had left every thing in the house as he had found it. But William had got out of reach, knowing he could not stand such a scrutiny. On examination, Mr. Fantom found that all his port was gone, and Mrs. Fantom missed three of her best new spoons. William was pursued but without success, and Mr. Fantom was so much discomposed, that he could not for the rest of the day talk on any subject but his wine and his spoons, nor harangue on any project but that of recovering both by bringing William to justice.

Some days passed away, in which Mr. Fantom having had time to cool, began to be ashamed that he had been betrayed into such ungoverned passion. He made the best excuse he could, said no man was perfect, and though he owned he had been too violent, yet he still hoped William would be brought to the punishment he deserved. "In the mean time," said Mr. Trueman, "Seeing how ill philosophy has agreed with your man, suppose you were to set about teaching your maids a little religion?" Mr. Fantom coolly replied, "that the impertinent retort of a drunken footman could not spoil a system. "Your system, however, and your own behaviour," said Trueman, "have made that footman a scoundrel: and you are answerable for his offences." "Not I truly," said Fantom, "he has neither seen me cheat, gamble, nor get drunk: and I defy you to say I corrupt my servants. I am a moral man, Sir." Mr. Fantom," said Trueman, "if you were to get drunk every day, and game every night, you would indeed endanger your own soul, and give a dreadful example to

your family ; but great as those sins are, and God forbid that I should attempt to lessen them, still they are not worse, nay, they are not so bad as the pestilent doctrines with which you infect your house and neighbourhood. A bad action is like a single murder, but a wicked principle is throwing lighted gunpowder into a town, it is poisoning a river; there are no bounds, no certainty, no end to it's mischief. The ill effects of the worst action may cease in time, and the consequences of your example may end with your life ; but souls may be brought to perdition by a wicked principle, after the author of it has been dead for ages.

Fantom. You talk like an ignoramus, who has never read the new Philosophy. All this nonsense of future punishment is now done away. It is *our* benevolence which makes us reject your creed; we can no more believe in a Deity who permits so much evil in the present world, than one who threatens eternal punishment in the next.

Trueman. What shall mortal be more merciful than God? Do you pretend to be more compassionate than that graci-

ous Father, who sent his Son into the world to die for sinners?

Fantom. You take all your notions of the Deity from the vulgar views your Bible gives you of him." "To be sure I do," said Trueman, "can you tell me any way of getting a better notion of him? I don't want any of your farthing-candle philosophy in the broad sun-shine of the Gospel, Mr. Fantom. My Bible tells me that *God is love*, not merely loving, but LOVE. Now do you think a Being whose very essence is love, would permit any misery among his children here, if it was not to be, some way or other, or somewhere or other, for their good? You forget too that in a world where there is sin there must be misery. There too, I suppose, God permits misery partly to exercise the sufferers and partly to try the prosperous; for by trouble God corrects some and tries others. Suppose now, Tom Saunders had not been put in prison, you and I——no, I beg pardon, *you* saved your guinea, well then, our club and I could not have shown our kindness by getting him out, nor would poor Saunders himself have

had an opportunity of exercising his own patience under want and imprisonment. So you see one reason why God permits misery, is that good men may have an opportunity of lessening it." Mr. Fantom replied, "There is no object which I have more at heart; I have as I told you a plan in my head of such universal benevolence as to include the happiness of all mankind." "Mr. Fantom," said, Trueman, "I feel that I have a general goodwill towards all my brethren of mankind; and if I had as much money in my purse as I have love in my heart, I trust I should prove it; all I say is, that in a station of life where I can't do much, I am more called upon to procure the happiness of a poor neighbour who has no one else to look to, than to form wild plans for the good of mankind too extensive to be accomplished, and too chimerical to be put in practice. I can't free whole countries, nor reform the evils of society at large, but I *can* free an aggrieved wretch in a workhouse, and I can reform myself and my own family,

Some weeks after a letter was brought to Mr. Fantom from his late servant William, who had been turned away for drunkenness, as related in the former part of this history, and who had also robbed his master of some wine and some spoons. Mr. Fantom glancing his eye over the letter said, it is dated from Chelmsford jail; that rascal is got into prison. I am glad of it with all my heart, it is the fittest place for such scoundrels. I hope he will be sent to Botany Bay, if not hanged." "O ho! my good friend, said Trueman, then I find that in abolishing all prisons you would just let one stand for the accomodation of those who should happen to rob *you*." Mr. Fantom drily observed, that he was not fond of jokes, and proceeded to read the letter. It expressed an earnest wish that his late master would condescend to pay him one visit in his dark and doleful abode, as he wished to say a few words to him, before the dreadful sentence of the law, which had already been pronounced should be executed."

"Let us go and see the poor fellow," said Trueman, "it is but a morning's

ride. If he is really so near his end it would be cruel to refuse him." "Not I truly," said Fantom, "he deserves nothing at my hands but the halter he is likely to meet with. Such port is not to be had for money, and the spoons part of my new dozen." "As to the wine," said Trueman, "I am afraid you must give that up, but the only way to get any tidings of the spoons is to go and hear what he has to say; I have no doubt but he will make such a confession as may be very useful to others, which you know, is one grand advantage of punishments; and besides, we may afford him some little comfort." "As to comfort he deserves none from me," said Fantom, "and as to his confessions they can be of no use to me, but as they give me a chance of getting my spoons, so I don't much care if I do take a ride with you."

When they came to the prison Mr. Trueman's tender heart sunk within him. He deplored the corrupt nature of man, which makes such rigorous confinement needful, not merely for the punishment of the offender, but for the safety of society. Fantom, from mere trick and

habit, was just preparing a speech on general benevolence, and the cruelty of imprisonment, till the recollection of his old port and his new spoons cooled his ardour, and he went on without saying a word. When they reached the cell where the unhappy William was confined they stopped at the door. The poor wretch had thrown himself on the ground as well as his chains would give him leave. He groaned piteously, and was so swallowed up with a sense of his own miseries, that he neither heard the door open, nor saw the gentlemen. He was attempting to pray, but in an agony which made his words hardly intelligible. Thus much they could make out.—“God be merciful to me a sinner—the chief of sinners!” then suddenly attempting to start up, but prevented by his irons, he roared out, “O God! thou canst *not* be merciful to me for I have denied thee; I have ridiculed my Saviour who died for me; I have derided his word, I have resisted his spirit. I have laughed at that heaven which is shut against me, I have denied those torments which await me. To-

morrow ! to-morrow ! O for a longer
 space for repentance, O for a short re-
 lieve from hell."—Mr. Trueman wept
 so loud that it drew the attention of the
 criminal, who now lifted up his eyes,
 and cast on his late master a look so dread-
 ful, that Fantom wished for a moment
 that he had given up all hope of the
 spoons rather than have exposed himself
 to such a scene. At length the poor
 wretch said, in a voice that would have
 melted a heart of stone, " O Sir, are
 you there ? I did wish to see you before
 my dreadful sentence is put in executi-
 on." Oh Sir ! to-morrow to-morrow !
 but I have a confession to make to you."
 This revived Mr. Fantom, who again
 ventured to glance a hope at the spoons.
 Sir, said William " I could not die
 without making my confession." " Aye,
 and restitution too I hope," replied Fan-
 tom. " Where are my spoons ?"—" Sir,
 they are gone with the rest of my wretch-
 ed booty. But Oh, Sir ! these spoons
 make so petty an article in my black ac-
 count that I hardly think of them. Mur-
 der, Sir, murder is the crime for which
 I am justly doomed to die. Oh, Sir !

Who can dwell with everlasting burnings?" As this was a question which even a philosopher could not answer. Mr. Fantom was going to steal off, especially as he now gave up all hope of the spoons; but William called him back—"Stay, Sir, stay, I conjure you, as you will answer it at the bar of God. You are the cause of my being about to suffer a shameful death. Yes, Sir, you made me a drunkard, a thief, and a murderer. How dare you, William," cried Mr. Fantom, with great emotion, "accuse me with being the cause of such horrid crimes?" "Sir," answered the criminal, "from you I learnt the principles which lead to those crimes. By the grace of God I should never have fallen into sins deserving of the gallows if I had not often overheard you say there was no hereafter, no judgment, no future reckoning. O, Sir! there is a hell, dreadful, inconceivable, eternal!" He, through the excess of anguish, the poor fellow fainted away. Mr. Fantom, who did not at all relish this scene, said to his friend, "well Sir, we will go if you

please, for you see there is nothing to be done."

"Sir," replied Mr. Trueman, mournfully, "you may go if you please, but I shall stay, for I see there is a great deal to be done." "What," rejoined the other, "do you think it possible his life can be saved?" "No, indeed," said Trueman, "but I hope it is possible his soul may be saved." "I don't understand these things," said Fantom, making towards the door. "Nor I neither," said Trueman, "but as a fellow sinner I am bound to do what I can for this poor fellow. Do you go home Mr. Fantom and finish your treatise on universal benevolence, and the blessed effects of philosophy; and hark ye, be sure you let the frontispiece of your book represent *William on the gibbet*: that will show what our parson calls a PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION. You know I hate theories; this is *realizing*: this is PHILOSOPHY made easy to the meanest capacities."

Mr. Fantom sneaked off to finish his

work at home, and Mr. Trueman straitened to finish his in the prison. He passed the night with the wretched convict, he prayed with him and for him, and read to him the penitential psalms, and some portions of the Gospel. But he was too humble and too prudent a man to venture out of his depth by arguments and consolations, which he was not warranted to use, (this he left for the minister. But he pressed on William the great duty of making the only amends now in his power to those whom he had led astray. They then drew up the following paper which Mr. Trueman got printed, and gave away at the place of execution.

THE
Last Words, Confession, and Dying
Speech

OF

WILLIAM WILSON,

Who was executed at CHELMSFORD for
Murder.

"I was bred up in the fear of God,
and lived with credit in many sober fa-
milies, in which I was a faithful servant.
But being tempted by a little higher wa-
ges, I left a good place to go and live
with Mr. Fantom, who, however, made
good none of his fine promises, but pro-
ved a hard master. In his service I
was not allowed time to go to church.
This troubled me at first, till I over-
heard my master say, that going to
church was a superstitious prejudice,
and only meant for the vulgar. Upon
this I resolved to go no more; for I

thought there could not be two religions
 one for the master, and one for the ser-
 vant. Finding my master never prayed,
 I too left off praying, this gave Satan
 great power over me, so that I from that
 time fell into almost every sin. I was
 very uneasy at first, and my conscience
 gave me no rest; but I was soon recon-
 ciled by overhearing my master and another
 gentleman say, that death was only a long
 sleep, and hell and judgment were but an
 invention of priests to keep the poor in
 order. I mention this as a warning to all
 masters and mistresses take care what they
 converse about while servants are waiting at
 table. They cannot tell how many souls they
 have sent to perdition by such loose talk.
 The crime for which I die is the natural
 consequence of the principles learnt of my
 master. A rich man, indeed, who throws
 off religion, may escape the gallows, because
 want does not drive him to commit the
 crimes which lead to it; but what shall
 restrain a needy man, who has been taught
 there is no dreadful reckoning? Oh, dear,
 fellow servants! take warning.

sad fate, never be tempted away
 from a sober service for the sake of a
 little more wages. Never venture your
 mortal souls in houses where God
 is not feared. And now hear me, O my
 God, though I have blasphemed thee;
 forgive me, O my Saviour! though I
 have denied thee. O Lord most holy,
 O God most mighty, deliver me from
 the bitter pains of eternal death! and
 receive my soul for his sake who died
 for sinners.

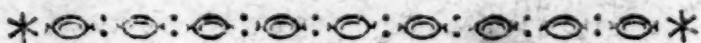
WILLIAM WILSON."


Mr. Trueman would never leave this
 poor penitent till he was launched into
 eternity, but attended him with the mi-
 nister in the Cart. This pious minister
 never cared to tell me what he thought
 of William's state. When I ventured
 to mention my hope, that though his
 penitence was late, yet it was sincere,
 and spoke of the dying thief on the cross
 as a ground of encouragement, the mi-
 nister, with a very serious look, made
 me this answer, "Sir, that instance is

too often brought forward on occasion to which it does not apply: I do not chuse to say any thing to your application of it in the present case, but I will answer you in the words of a good man speaking of the penitent thief." There is *one* such instance given that nobody might despair, and there is *but one* that nobody might presume.

Poor William was turned off just quarter before eleven, and may the Lord have mercy on his soul!

Z.



 Next week will be published the HUBB